

GENERAL NOTES

This publication is based on data obtained from two surveys. The bachelor's and master's degree data were obtained from universe institution surveys of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education. Data on doctorates are from the Survey of Earned Doctorates, a universe survey of individual doctorate recipients; it is sponsored by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and four other Federal agencies.

These data cover earned degrees conferred in the aggregate United States, which comprises the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Territories and Outlying Areas (American Samoa, the former Canal Zone, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, and the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands). Degree data are compiled for a 12-month period, July through June of the following year. For convenience, degrees in a given July-through-June period are referred to by the year in which the period ended; e.g., 1998 means the 12-month period ending June 1998.

It is difficult to establish a completely consistent series of degree data over a long period of time because of changes in definitions, instructions, and field classifications, including the introduction of new specialties. The data for earlier years are presented as consistently as

possible with the classifications used in the current *Classification of Instructional Programs* (Washington, DC, Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office). See the Technical Notes for further information on the field classifications used.

The publication focuses on degrees in science and engineering fields, and, where appropriate, the data are reclassified according to NSF field categories. It should be noted that data on engineering technology degrees and degrees in the health/medical sciences are not included in the science and engineering totals here. The time series for this report begins in 1966.

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